Notices to CS, others on plea against WCLA head's posting

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court has issued notices to the Punjab chief secretary and others on a petition challenging the appointment of the director general of the Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA).

Chief Justice Aalia Neelum heard the petition filed by Azeem Yaqoob, a resident of the walled city.

Advocate Shakoh Zulqernain argued on behalf of the petitioner that the respondent DG, Najamus Saqib, does not possess the qualifications and experience to hold the post.

He pointed out that section 6 of the Walled City of Lahore Act, 2012, requires a BS-20 government officer with at least 15 years' management or academic experience specifically in heritage, culture, or urban planning for the post of DG.

The counsel asserted that the advertisement was unlawfully altered to include unrelated degrees such as architecture and social sciences to accommodate the respondent, who is only a BS-19 officer appointed on contract and lacking the required statutory credentials.

He contended that the respondent's selection was illegal, ultra vires to the relevant law and violative of the rights of eligible candidates.

He asked the court to declare the impugned appointment void and set aside the notification of the respondent.

The chief justice directed a law officer to seek instructions from the respondents and submit their replies by the next hearing.

— **Staff Reporter**

Full bench to hear pleas against 27th amendment on Dec 5

LAHORE: A Lahore High Court full bench constituted to decide the petitions against the 27th Amendment will resume its proceedings on Dec 5.

Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan is the head of the bench with Justice Jawad Hassan and Justice Sultan Tanvir Ahmad as its members.

Chief Justice Aalia Neelum had constituted the full bench after a single judge recused himself from the petitions.

A petition was filed by lawyers Munir Ahmad and Mian Shabbir Ismail through Advocate Azhar Siddique, arguing that the amendment conflicts with the basic structure and spirit of the 1973 Constitution.

The petition says there is a fear that the status of the Supreme Court will be weakened and judicial independence compromised following the amendment.

The petition alleges that the amendment has distorted the country`s 60-year judicial history and tradition.

It further argues that the current National Assembly is not a true constituent assembly and therefore lacks the authority to introduce such major constitutional changes. The amendment, it says, runs counter to Islamic provisions, judicial independence and fundamental rights.

In a second plea, a citizen, Hassan Latif, has again filed a petition against the 27th Amendment. — Staff Reporter

TTP operative gets 31-year jail term

SAHIWAL: A regional judge of the Anti-Terrorism Court on Wednesday sentenced an operative of the banned outfit Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to 31 years of imprisonment under multiple anti-terrorism and explosives charges.

Muhammad Tahir (27), a resident of Heerabad, Hyderabad (Sindh), was arrested by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on July 8, 2025, at village 100A/6-R, Purani Harappa Road.

According to CTD officials, he was found in possession of two kilograms of explosive material and live electronic devices.

He was booked under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, and Sections 4 and 5 of the Explosive Substances Act, 1908.

After due legal proceedings, the court convicted him under all three sections, awarding a cumulative sentence of 31 years. Tahir has been shifted to Central Prison Sahiwal to serve his sentence.

— **Correspondent**

LAHORE: Encroachments by shopkeepers in Akbari Mandi create problems for pedestrians. — Online

Lahore ranked world's most polluted again as AQI soars to 386

Govt claims easterly winds worsening smog situation across central Punjab

By Imran Gabol

LAHORE: The Punjab government claimed on Wednesday that easterly winds had been consistently pushing polluted air from India's border regions into Lahore and worsening the smog situation across central Punjab.

Officials said high PM2.5 levels recorded in Amritsar, Jalandhar and Ludhiana were now directly impacting air quality in Lahore and Kasur, where calm winds of around 2 miles per hour were trapping pollution near the ground during the night and early morning.

They said a rapid drop in temperature, combined with an inversion layer and rising humidity, had prevented pollutants from dispersing upward, allowing smog to settle over the city. As a result, Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhupura, Gujranwala and Faisalabad witnessed a marked rise in their Air Quality Index (AQI).

Lahore once again ranked as the most polluted city in the world in the early hours of Wednesday, with its AQI touching 386 at 8am. The index improved to 193 by 2pm but deteriorated again to 201 by 5pm.

Officials warned that smoke accumulation in central Punjab could intensify due to lack of vertical air mixing, though southern districts including Multan, Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan were experiencing relatively better dispersion.

Despite the cross-border impact, the government insisted that Punjab's smog-control strategy was "proving effective" under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's Clean Air Mission.

A spokesperson said all departments had intensified enforcement, surveillance and mitigation measures.

On the CM's instructions, digital surveillance, drone monitoring and zero-tolerance enforcement are underway across major urban centres.

The Environmental Protection Force conducted a late-night crackdown in industrial zones, sealing dozens of smoke-emitting units.

The deployment of 5,000 super seeders has led to a "historic reduction" in stubble burning, which officials described as a major step toward transforming agricultural practices. Brick kilns have been shifted to white-smoke systems, while substandard chimneys are being targeted for strict action.

The government has also expedited e-fitness certification of vehicles and barred unfit vehicles from entering Lahore.

The Lahore Waste Management Authority is operating controlled dump sites, enforcing fire-free operations, and carrying out night-long water sprinkling to suppress dust.

Senior Punjab Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said the smog situation in Lahore was being continuously monitored and that Punjab was "moving toward a clean air system."

She urged citizens to avoid going outdoors during low-visibility hours, wear masks, and seek medical advice in case of respiratory discomfort. Children, the elderly and asthma patients were advised to take special precautions and keep indoor spaces ventilated.

Meanwhile, Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan said strict action against smoke-emitting vehicles was under way. Between Nov 1 and 18, the transport and mass transit department inspected 9,811 vehicles in Lahore. Of these, 1,421 were ticketed for lacking fitness certificates or emitting smoke, while 422 were impounded. Another 1,371 vehicles were fined for overloading, taking total penalties to Rs18 million. The department also registered 372 FIRs and arrested 348 drivers during anti-smog operations.

Mr Khan said the anti-smog drive would be further expanded and warned that no leniency would be shown to violators.

"Vehicles violating the law will be impounded and FIRs will be registered. Smog can only be eliminated through mutual cooperation and concrete measures," he said. Citizens may file smog-related complaints through the Green Punjab portal or by calling 1373.

A spokesperson for the housing department said the Punjab Horticulture Authority (PHA) was accelerating its green mission across the province. Tree washing campaigns were being regularly conducted in 10 districts, including Lahore, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Sahiwal, Multan, Bahawalpur, DG Khan and Sialkot.

He said the activity improves tree health and enhances their capacity to reduce environmental and visual pollution. "The PHA is determined to make Punjab smog-free and is ensuring the best possible use of available resources," he added.

Husband sentenced to death for killing wife

Other family members also found guilty

MULTAN: An additional district and sessions judge in Multan has sentenced to death the husband of the 20-year-old pregnant woman who was killed last year in Multan, it emerged on Wednesday.

Sania Zehra — a mother of two — was found dead in her room on July 9, 2024, hanging from a ceiling fan.

Her father, Syed Asad Abbas, had claimed that her sudden death was not a suicide but an alleged murder. He said his daughter's in-laws were disguising the murder as a suicide.

A first information report (FIR) was registered at the New Multan police station on his complaint under sections 148 (rioting armed with a deadly weapon), 149 (unlawful assembly) and 302 (intentional murder) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

In a one-page court order, dated Nov 18 — a copy of which is available with *Dawn* — additional sessions judge Mohsin Ali Khan ruled that Syed Muhammad Ali Raza has been "duly convicted of the Qatal-i-Amd of Sania Zehra deceased," and sentenced the convict to "death as Ta'zir under Section 302 (b) of the PPC."

"Syed Muhammad Ali Raza convict shall be hanged by neck till his death is pronounced," the court order read.

According to Section 302(b) of the PPC, "whoever commits Qatal-i-Amd shall be punished with death or imprisonment for life as ta'zir."

The court also directed the convict to pay Rs500,000 to the victim's family as compensation under Section 554-A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, adding that "in case of default he (the convict) shall undergo imprisonment for six months".

In two separate court orders — both seen by *Dawn* — the brother of the main convict, Syed Haider Raza, and his mother, Syeda Azra Parveen, were also found guilty of the murder of Zehra.

The court sentenced them both to life imprisonment and directed each of them to pay Rs500,00 to the family of the victim.

In July 2024, a 20-year-old pregnant mother of two was found dead in Multan. The FIR, which narrated her father's complaint, stated that he received a call from a police official, who asked him to head to his daughter's residence.

The complaint said that after the family reached the scene, they found the victim hanging from a ceiling fan. It said when the forensic specialist arrived at the scene and tried to untie the noose around the victim's neck, it opened up quite easily. It said that a doctor present at the scene said that the victim had died at 6pm that day.

The police registered a case under sections 302, 148, and 149 of the PPC against deceased's husband Ali Raza, his brother Haider, father Jeevan Shah, mother Azra Bibi, sister Kanwal Bibi, and sister-in-law Syeda Dua on the complaint of the deceased's father.— **Imran Gabol**

40 TLP ticket-holders dissociate from party

BAHAWALPUR: Forty former assembly ticket-holders belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) from the Bahawalpur division have announced their dissociation from the proscribed party.

Speaking at a news conference at the Bahawalpur Press Club, they said they were not part of any protest or demonstration against the government. They claimed to be patriots who believe in a strong Pakistan.

Meanwhile, it has been learnt that the Punjab Home Department has included the names of 23 activists, leaders, and workers of the banned TLP from Vehari district in the Fourth Schedule.

The CCD office Vehari has issued all their names, which included former assemblies TLP ticket holders. They included eight of Vehari, while seven belonged to Mailsi and Burewala each.

The CCD has conveyed their names and lists to all the concerned government departments and related law-enforcement agencies (LEAs). The persons declared in Fourth Schedule have also been directed not to leave their respective areas without prior permission of their related police stations and LEAs.

SCHOOLS SEALED: The Multan Saddar district education officer (DEO) has sealed three private educational institutions for their refusal to cooperate with the anti-polio, rubella and measles vaccination campaigns.

CEO Dr. Safdar Hussain announced that any private school failing to cooperate in the vaccination drives would face sealing, saying that children's health is the prime issue.

GANG BUSTED: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Multan Zone claimed to have arrested four members of a gang involved in human smuggling and visa fraud cases from different areas of south Punjab.

The arrested suspects, according to FIA officials, are: Gorish Farooq, Muhammad Matin, Usama and Naveed.

Sources say Gorish and Usama allegedly defrauded complainants of over Rs1.4 million. Matin reportedly extorted over Rs2.7m from complainants under the false promise of sending them to Britain.

KIDNAP: A woman beneficiary of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has alleged that her daughter was abducted from the BISP office in Jalalpur Pirwala on Wednesday while she was there to collect her quarterly assistance amount.

Jalalpur Pirwala city police sources said Sakina Bibi, from village Inayatpur, and her daughter Hajiran Bibi had arrived to collect the payment. Hajiran Bibi left the centre to get a photocopy of her CNIC from a nearby shop. The mother alleged that one Mohsin kidnapped her daughter and fled from the scene.

Jalalpur city police have registered a complaint under section 366 of Pakistan Penal Code, nominating suspect Mohsin. Further investigation is underway. — **Correspondent**

Public disillusioned by 'suppressive system': JI

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Jamaat-i-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has said that the suppressive system during the last 78 years has broken the dreams of the people instead of giving them relief.

He said the courts failed to provide justice and institutions also failed to deliver. He said the masses are deprived of the fundamental rights and facilities and there is no one who could inquire after them.

He said the 26th and 27th amendments have further worsened the situation.

Addressing a press conference at Minar-i-Pakistan Ijtima along with Secretary General Ameerul Azeem and Naib Emir JI and Nazim Ijtima-i-Aam Liaquat Baloch, he said the JI could not leave the masses at the mercy of the landlords and mafias, adding that convoys have started reaching here to participate in the congregation.

On the occasion, JI Lahore Emir Ziauddin Ansari Advocate and Secretary Information Shakil Ahmed Turabi were also present.

He said arrangements for boarding and lodging of thousands of people had been completed. He said the leaders of Islamic movements in large numbers from abroad will also attend the event.

Rehman said currently masses are severely disappointed and worried and they are unable to see any ray of hope from any side, adding that youth is 65 per cent of population but they are unable to secure education and employment.

He said the doors of higher education have been closed for the poor, adding that in the class-based system the child of the rich is getting education but the child of the poor is out of school.

He said the rulers while distributing a few laptops think that they have fulfilled their duty.

Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said the JI would make alliance with the masses, adding that farmers, labourers, teachers, students and lawyers are allies of the Jamaat, adding that "we will jointly run the movement of supremacy of Islam in the country".

Rehman said he would announce the future course of action at the last day of the congregation.

He said a big package of education and employment will be brought for Generation Z and youth.

A STAGE is being prepared at Minar-i-Pakistan for Jamaat-i-Islami's three-day public congregation. — White Star